

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

1(cancelled).

2(cancelled).

3(previously presented). A papermaking machine having at least one belt for transporting a paper sheet along a path in the machine wherein the paper sheet is in parallel, juxtaposed relation to a surface of the belt, the belt comprising a base layer and a resin layer, wherein all of said resin layer either overlies or underlies the base layer at any location along said path when the papermaking belt is mounted on a papermaking machine, the resin layer having a middle part and opposite side edge parts, wherein the thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the resin layer is smaller than that of the middle part thereof, whereby curling of side edges of the belt is prevented by suppressing differential thermal contraction between the base layer and the resin layer.

4(previously presented). A papermaking machine according to claim 3, wherein said belt is a belt from the group consisting of shoe press belts and transfer belts.

5(previously presented). A papermaking machine according to claim 3, in which the papermaking machine includes rollers having cylindrical surfaces over which the belt travels, and in which the belt has opposite parallel surfaces, one of which contacts the cylindrical surfaces of the rollers over its entire width.

6(currently amended). A papermaking machine having at least one belt for transporting a paper sheet along a path in the machine wherein the paper sheet is in parallel, juxtaposed

relation to a surface of the belt, the belt comprising a base layer having opposite surfaces, a thin resin layer formed on one of the surfaces of the base layer and a thick resin layer formed on the other surface of the base layer, wherein all of said thick resin layer either overlies or underlies the base layer at any location along said path, the thick resin layer ~~having~~ has a middle part and opposite side edge parts, ~~wherein~~ and the thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the thick resin layer is smaller than that of the middle part thereof, whereby curling of side edges of the belt is prevented by suppressing differential thermal contraction between the base layer and the thick resin layer.

7(previously presented). A papermaking machine according to claim 6, wherein said belt is a belt from the group consisting of shoe press belts and transfer belts.

8(previously presented). A papermaking machine according to claim 6, in which the papermaking machine includes rollers having cylindrical surfaces over which the belt travels, and in which the belt has opposite parallel surfaces, one of which contacts the cylindrical surfaces of the rollers over its entire width.

9(cancelled).

10(cancelled).

11(cancelled).

12(cancelled).

13(cancelled).

14(cancelled).

15(previously presented). A papermaking machine according to claim 3, comprising a nip, said nip being composed of a first element located in opposed relationship to said surface of the belt, and a second element in opposed relationship to said first element, the belt being movable between said elements, and said elements being sufficiently close to each other to apply pressure to a paper sheet on said belt.

16(previously presented). A papermaking machine according to claim 6, comprising a nip, said nip being composed of a first element located in opposed relationship to said surface of the belt, and a second element in opposed relationship to said first element, the belt being movable between said elements, and said elements being sufficiently close to each other to apply pressure to a paper sheet on said belt.

REMARKS

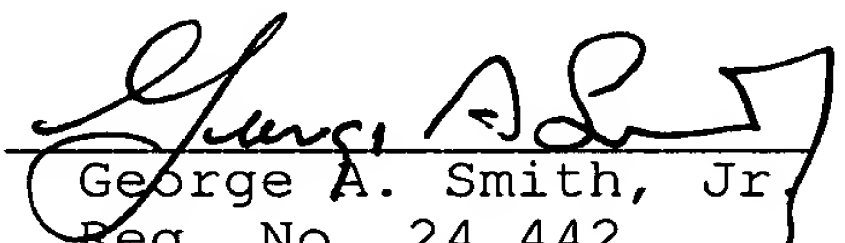
Claim 6 is amended in substantially the same manner in which claim 3 was previously amended. Claim 6 now recites a "thick resin layer" and that "all of said thick resin layer either overlies or underlies the base layer at any location along" the paper transport path. Claim 6 also requires the "thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the thick resin layer" to be "smaller than that of the middle part thereof."

These limitations distinguish the invention from Stigberg. As shown in Stigberg's FIG. 5, Stigberg's polymeric coating 56 has a reduced portion (at the left of FIG. 5), but the reduced portion does not overlie or underlie the reinforcing web 50. Thus, claim 6, and its dependent claims 7, 8, and 16 can be found allowable for the same reason that claims 3 - 5 and 15 were found allowable.

In the claim status identifiers, the terms "previously added" and "previously amended" have been changed to "previously presented."

Reconsideration of the application, and allowance of claims 3-8, 15 and 16, are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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